

## 5. A RECORD OF THE NILGIRI MARTEN (*MARTES GWATKINSI* HORSFIELD) IN UPPER BHAVANI

The Nilgiri Marten (*Martes gwatkinsi*) was sighted in Upper Bhavani on 22nd January 1995 at 0700 hr, while walking towards Bison swamp for our field work. A sambar (*Cervus unicolor*) was disturbed by our presence and started running through the swamp after giving its alarm call. Immediately a Nilgiri Marten came from behind a hidden boulder and stood on its hindlegs and looked around. It stood about 15 m ahead of us. We were able to see it clearly with naked eye and through binoculars. It was about less than a meter from head to rump, dark brown in colour with buff white on its throat and had a black stripe on its snout. As we were puzzled, we could not make certain whether

the throat was dusty white or yellow. After a few minutes it disappeared into the shola. The swampy area was surrounded by different sized shola patches and wattle plantations. The altitude of the area was above 2000 msl. All the above details coincide with the descriptions given in Prater (1971, The Book of Indian Animals). This is the first record from Upper Bhavani.

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## 6. BACK RIDING AND POSSIBLE AERIAL MATING AMONGST THE LARGE FRUIT BAT, *PTEROPUS GIGANTEUS* (BRUNNICH)

A rather interesting phenomenon was observed by me on 10th September 1991 around 1800 hr., while sitting outside the office campus at Beohari, Shahdol District of Madhya Pradesh.

Several Large Fruit Bats (*Pteropus giganteus*) were observed flying in our direction and flying over and behind us. Suddenly, one of two almost equal sized bats, which were flying parallel to each other, indulged in an unexpected act. It mounted the other bat, though for a few seconds only, then dismounted and continued its normal flight. The noticeable points were, that the impact of the mounting bat caused a dip in the flight of the other bat and the dismount was associated with jerks of the ventral portion of

the mounted bat, which suggests, possible mating. Thereafter a keen eye was kept on other bats, but the act was not repeated.

The carriage of young on their backs has been recorded in other species of bats (Brosset *JBNHS* 59: 57). The method of mating has been described as the male overlapping female while hanging and the normal copulation posture is as that among mammals (Brosset *JBNHS* 60: 350).

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## 7. INTERBREEDING BETWEEN GRIZZLED GIANT SQUIRREL, *RATUFA MACROURA* (PENNANT) AND MALABAR GIANT SQUIRREL, *R. INDICA* (ERXLEBEN)

The endangered Grizzled Giant Squirrel (GGS) exists in a few isolated populations in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and southern Karnataka (Davidar 1989, Ramachandran 1989, Joshua 1992, Karthikeyan *et al.* 1992) and Sri Lanka (Wroughton 1910, Phillips 1915, Ellerman 1961). The Srivilliputtur Grizzled Giant Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary (SGGSWS) in

Tamil Nadu harbours the largest population of c.200 animals where it occurs in Ayyanarkoil, Viriyankoil, Alagarkoil, Pulavukal, Koilaar and Sundaramahalingamkoil areas which are isolated. Ayyanarkoil Valley which lies on the southeastern boundary of the sanctuary, is the southern most limit for the species.